AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Cancelled).

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ A method ~~according to claim 2~~ of evaluating the efficiency of a sterilization process, which comprises the steps of:

   a) subjecting a sufficient amount of at least one prion protein degradation indicator in a container to said sterilization process; and

   b) determining the level of degradation of said indicator,

   wherein said indicator of step a) is transcribed by a gene naturally occurring in a ~~wherein said~~ fungus selected from the group consisting of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, and *Podospora anserina*.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 3, wherein said indicator is transcribed by a gene selected from the group consisting of SUP35, URE2 and HET-s.

5. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~2~~ 3, wherein said indicator is selected from the group consisting of Sup35p, Ure2p, Het-s protein, and combination thereof.

6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein said indicator is a purified form naturally occurring in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae, Podospora anserina* or a fungus, a recombinant form, an analog, a mutant, or a fragment of said indicator.

7. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein said indicator is a biological indicator, a biochemical indicator, or a chemical indicator.

8. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein step b) is performed by determining the weight or the mass, quantifying radicals, colorimetric variations, radiometry, nephelometry, immuno-enzymatic method, Westerm blotting, dot blotting, radioimmuno

assay, circular dichroism, electron microscopy, fluorescent microscopy, FTIR, Congo red binding, or proteinase digestion.

9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein said sterilization process is performed by autoclaving, chemical exposure, dry heating, low temperature plasma gas, ozone-based exposure, or sterilization techniques using ~~alkylant~~ alkylating and/or oxidizing sterilizing agents.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein said chemical exposure is a vapor or a solution selected from the group consisting of detergent, ethylene oxide, protease, sodium hydroxide, and enzyme.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein said amount of indicator of step a) is between 0.1 ng to 100 g.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein said container is of a material selected from the group consisting of paper, glass, borosilicate, metal, polymer, alloy, and composite.

13. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~11~~ 3, wherein said container is porous, permeable, or semi-permeable.